(b) whether this proposed expansion of Navodaya Vidyalayas will be taken up from the current budget year and if so, whether adequate allocation have been made in the current budget; and

(c) whether reservation for SC/ST communities in these schools will be in accordance with the Apex Court's directives capping the reservation limit to 50 per cent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (c) Planning Commission has intimated that a proposal to set.up Navodaya Vidyalayas in those districts which have significant Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population was placed before the Group of Ministers on Dalit Affairs. The proposal comprised 208 districts on the basis of 2001 census figures. Planning Commission has further informed that no formal decision has been taken in the matter. A provision of Rs. 275.00 crore has been made for the purpose in the budget for 2007-08.

Utilisation of funds under SSA

2134. SHRI B.K HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state.

(a) whether the fund utilization for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for the year ended 31st December, 2006 has improved with Government utilizing more than 75 per cent of the funds available;

(b) whether States like Assam and Orissa, lagging behind earlier, have shown increased utilization of funds; and

(c) whether the improved fund utilization for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is attributed to better project management and a dedicated and motivated team at the ground level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) The States/UTs reported expenditure of Rs. 9770.25 crores till 31st December, 2006, which is 74.33% of total funds available with them under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme.

(b) Assam and Orissa have reported expenditure of Rs. 221.96 crores and Rs. 313.39 crores *i.e.* 55.60% and 61.45% respectively as on 31st

December, 2006 as against Rs. 216.77 crore *i.e.* 68.83% and Rs. 343.07 crore *i.e.* 56.72% as on 31st December, 2005 against the funds available with them for SSA.

(c) The regular monitoring of physical and financial progress by the Ministry has improved fund utilization.

Institutional framework of EDUSAT

2135. DR. K. KASTURIRANGAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered it appropriate to set up an institutional framework to integrate, promote, coordinate and optimize the capability and capacity of EDUSAT, the country's Space system, for curriculum based distance-education, enrichment, training and developmental communication;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the details of the existing institutional mechanisms between his Ministry and its associate bodies like UGC, Professional Bodies, Open Universities and State Institutions to effectively use this important space resource to augment and strengthen the existing methods of education, training and enrichment;

(d) whether there is an assessment of the adequacy of the existing institutional mechanism; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) A core group under the Chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was set up to act as a focal point for utilizing the EDUSAT facility.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.